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'Hopeful, optimistic'

Sculptor tilts Muskie upward

By SUSAN SCANLAN

SOUTH HARPSWELL — The first thing that strikes you about Arnold Burchess is the intensity of his blue eyes that look inside you, not only at you.

The first thing that strikes you about the bronze bust he recently sculpted of Senator Edmund S. Muskie is the unusual way the head is poised — tilted upward instead of straight ahead.

Burchess said he positioned the head that way to convey "the hopeful, optimistic, honest atmosphere" of a man he has admired for a good many years.

"With all the heads I've seen and done there have been practically none looking up," the 61-year-old artist says.

And the man has seen and formed many heads. Burchess is in his first year of retirement after leaving Fashion Institute of Technology of New York City, where he has been head of the art department. He is famous for his sculptures, water colors and slate engravings. His works have been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, National Academy of Design, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, U.S. National Museum, Delgado Museum of Art, Birmingham Museum of Art, and he has had one man shows at J. Walter Thompson and the Van Durand Galleries. His sculpture has appeared on the walls of Radio City Music Hall, and he has lectured on his techniques at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

While Burchess admits feeling apathetic toward most politicians, he began work on the Muskie bust last spring at the urging of his close friend, Ron Nason, director and owner of Merrymeeting Waterfowl Museum in Brunswick.

Nason, who financed creation of the bust and will later present it to the Senator, describes Muskie as "one of the few politicians in this day and age who can hold his head up straight." He has also been an admirer of the Senator "because — way back in the 1950's Ed Muskie was talking about the environment of the state."

Burchess explains his decision to undertake the work as "a labor of love" for Nason, whose work he appreciates, for Muskie, whose political performance he admires, and for the people of Maine, whose character he finds rare.

The bust recently returned to Burchess' studio at his South Harpswell home from the Roman Bronze Foundry in New York City, where it was cast. Nason is planning to formally present it to Muskie during a ceremony either at Washington, D.C. or Augusta, following a brief showing at his waterfowl museum where area residents will have a chance to view it, and probably another at the Farnsworth Museum in Rockland along with an exhibition of other Burchess bronzes. Eventually it will probably be permanently displayed at the State House.

His initial work on the portrait bust began last spring with "many phone calls to Washington," and he started his sculpture from a series of photographs Muskie sent him since he couldn't leave Washington while Congress was in session. Later last summer, Muskie, his wife Jane and their daughter visited Burchess for two days at his Harpswell waterfront home. During the sittings several of Burchess' friends dropped by to talk with the Senator.

"We talked about political philosophy but all avoided Watergate," Burchess recalls. "He talked about his childhood, his father, and his attitudes toward work. I was impressed with his directness and his simple honesty in dealing with anybody, big or small."

Later, Burchess and his wife visited Muskie at his Kennebunkport home for a final sitting. He describes Muskie as easier to sculpt than most people because he has "a very strong, distinctive head."

Burchess said the Senator told him he had never before sat for a portrait, much less a bust.

Now that his portrait bust is completed, Nason again is trying to convince Burchess to do more work. "There's an awful lot of sculpture around, but there are damn few who can sculpture a portrait bust and make it breathe like that," Nason says, pointing to the Muskie head.

Since a sculpture provides a more enduring and dimensional record of a person than a painting, Nason would like to see his friend forge images of other famous Mainers, like former Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Governor Kenneth Curtis, artist Andrew Wyeth. And Burchess is willing, although his work doesn't come cheap.

Born in Chicago, Burchess' immediate family has spawned no other artists but he says other relatives have been dancers, choreographers, writers and psychiatrists. He first came to Maine 14 summers ago to paint coastal scenes during what he describes as his "rocks, water and sky period," has returned ever since and has been a year-round resident for the past two years. His wife, Anne, also retired now, has worked as a concert pianist and psychotherapist at Queen's College in New York City.

Since the "rocks, water and sky period," Burchess says his pieces are now more simple. "I don't put any whip cream embellishments on it — it's a simple statement of man's condition."

He has alo become more interested in working with faces. "If you take a hundred people and line them up with or without clothes on there's a good possibility you can see what is going on within one person."

While Burchess has settled into Maine and became a member of the Harpswell Neck Volunteer Ambulance Association, he misses the contact he formerly had with students and the constant exchange of ideas he found in New York. "I don't have many arguments," he says.

Other than the possibility of sculpting the heads of prominent Mainers, he is considering working with art students while they are in college or after they graduate. A few Bowdoin students regularly drop by his house for suggestions.

Although during his career Burchess has gathered a long list of credits (he is cited in *Who's Who in the East* and *Who's Who in American Art*), and his work can be found in many private collections including that of the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, he remains relatively unknown in Maine.

"Here's a fellow with all the talent in the world and nobody knows it's here," Nason says.

Artist Arnold Burchess, left, and Ron Nason, director of Merrymeeting Waterfowl Museum, stand by a portrait bust of Senator Edmund S. Muskie cast in bronze inside Burchess' South Harpswell studio. The bust will soon be formally presented to the Senator. (Scanlan photo)

Bath park getting closer to reality

BATH — The city needs a park on the Kennebec River thought Linwood Temple back in 1972, and now, largely through his determined efforts, the dream is turning to reality.

Temple, a resident of 35 Park St. and an employe at Bath Iron Works Corp., said today a mini-park, utilizing a portion of the approved acre-plus area just south of BathPort Ltd., will be in finished form by July 1.

This is part one of the dream he said, to give the people of Bath "something to go on," a real sense that the waterfront park, with trees, knolls and a brook, will come to be.

The big boost for the park came this year from the city council, which approved without trimming a $15,000 allocation for construction. Temple hopes that figure can be matched locally through fund raising campaigns and private donations.

Temple, chairman of the Waterfront Park Action Committee, is banking on written assurance from Fred M. Bartlett, supervisor of Federal Aid for the Maine Department of Parks and Recreation, Augusta, that $37,500 in federal funds will be earmarked for the project.

He said it's unlikely at this point that $11,250 sought in state funds will come through, hence the local fund drive for $15,000. If that goal can be reached, the park can be completed within a year or so, according to Temple.

"This should be a community project, something people here take pride in, because it belongs to them," Temple said, adding that work schedules and occasions such as a "tree planting day" will be organized this spring.

One hurdle that has held up mini-park construction has been overcome. Rip-rap stone is needed to firm up and protect the riverbank, and it now will be available through an arrangement with the sewer construction on Washington Street.

Temple said the park's prospects are brightening now that something visible and tangible will finally be there for people to see and use. Presently, the area is used for municipal parking, and only the boat landing indicates the land is meant for another purpose.

"There will be parking for about 14 cars at the Waterfront Park, but no more — the park is for people, not vehicles," he said.

The committee proposed the park to the city council in January 1972, and the idea went to the voters in a 1973 referendum. Temple cites that vote as a clear mandate that the recreational and leisure-time facility is a top priority with the people of Bath.

The completed park will feature a "brook" created by pumping river water up, then allowing it to flow back down. A small wooden footbridge will cross the brook. Walkways through the park will be crushed feldspar.

The walks will wend between small hills dotted with trees of different kinds (though probably no elms), and other greenery to be planted this spring or fall.

Students at the Hyde School have let the committee know they are interested in volunteering to help build the mini-park, and Temple said their services will be gratefully accepted.

The mini-park wil use about one third of the total Waterfront Park area.

Any other persons interested in helping with the park are asked to call Linwood Temple, or leave a note with the city clerk's office at city hall.

City Manager Jerry Maxwell has established a tax-exempt account for those wishing to contribute money to the park. "In kind" donations, such as seedling trees, are as welcome as cash contributions.

As yet, there is no official name for the downtown Bath park. It's been suggested that the park might take the name of a major contributor, should such be found.

Hyde School given lots of praise

BATH — Two administrators from the Farmington school system visited Hyde School Monday upon the recommendation of the state's commissioner of education to evaluate possibilities of developing pilot programs in public schools based on Hyde's educational philosophy.

Superintendent J. Raymond Brennick and assistant principal Roger Bourassa of Mt. Blue High School, both with the Farmington system, spent the day with Hyde students in classes and held conferences with the school's head master, Joseph Gauld.

Maine Commissioner of Education Dr. Carroll McGary visited Hyde School in January and recommended other educators in the state visit the school to make their own evaluations about Hyde's philosophy on education.

The two visitors said they learned of Hyde's concern for students, and talked with them during lunch about their attitudes toward the school.

Both said they felt the day had been informative and strongly feel there is definitely a place for Hyde's "character development" within their school system.

They agree with Dr. McGary, who wrote in the March issue of *Maine Insight*, an educator's newsletter, that "the Hyde School has begun to develop a model which can help all of us make certain that there are no kids who get lost in the shuffle."

Hyde School recently received national recognition in an article published in *The New York Times* centered around philosophies of three different private schools, including a description of Hyde School's education theory.

The article states that Hyde focuses upon "character development" and stresses the importance of the individual's "unique potential". The school believes in the value of teaching students moral education. The school instills the Hyde student with a sense of his own values and ethics for life, the article pointed out. Now in its seventh year, Hyde has an enrollment of about 150 students in grades 9 through 12.

Academic preparedness for college becomes secondary as the school focuses upon character growth, Hyde administrators say. Students are encouraged to question their values and those of their peers. The Hyde School senior is ranked according to his or her character development, unlike the present system of class ranking according to grades.

A radio show was broadcast on all Mutual Broadcasting System stations Monday at 9 a.m. with Headmaster Gauld and two students. The students related their personal experience at Hyde. The program explained in depth the Hyde philosophy of education through the interviewed students' first hand knowledge and experience.

A most uninspired lecture

BRUNSWICK — For a world-renowned ornithologist, Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill was a disappointment in his presentation at Bowdoin College Tuesday night, because a genuine love and respect for nature were lacking.

Commentary

The former head of Cornell University's ornithology lab had his wife project a two-part film called "Another Penguin Summer" while he offered a clever commentary that often poked fun at the admittedly funny looking birds, but overlooked the vital harmony of nature and the role man and beast play in maintaining it.

The shooting of the films was expertly done, as was the editing, and cute and condescending remarks aside, the various penguins in their habitats and colonies were beautiful.

Penguins are indeed peculiar, and some of their behavior mirrors human actions, or at least we humans can "read in" our motives watching the short-legged pot-bellied sea birds. But is this all there is to it? Is this how an ornithologist wants us to think of these resourceful, adaptable birds?

Pettingill's talk, woven into the film in a sense, seemed devoid of any environmental ethics, something he undoubtedly has and could express. The bird scholar seemed more concerned with cocktail hour entertainment than with doing the Falkland Island penguins justice.

Perhaps Dr. Pettingill is tired of presenting the same talk with the same film. When I walked into Pickard Theater, I thought the voice was a recorded soundtrack.

It would be unfair to deny the film presented a wealth of information on the self-directed penguin, who is at home in the sea but is gawky and slow on dry land, where these large birds go to colonize and nest. Eggs are incubated about 30 days before they hatch.

Penguins vary in size. There are 17 kinds, the largest, the Emperor, weighing in at 90 pounds. Others, such as the King and the smaller Jackass penguin weigh much less. The Jackass gets its name because it brays like its namesake.

Penguins are much like people in their group habitation and floundering progress from awkward chick to henpecked parent, but they are not on this earth simply to be laughed at. Perhaps there is more to learn from these birds than the fact that they entertain us.

If we humans are gawky and flounder along, and the penguins show us we are this way, that is something gained. But penguins enjoy their land-and-sea environment, they don't rape and deface it as people do, knowingly or otherwise.

Penguins live at the Arctic, along the coast of South America and Africa, and among Pacific Islands. But they're mostly out sporting with whales and dolphins, shining white and black out to sea, and not ashore, according to Pettingill.

Classifieds PAY

When he swerved to avoid two stopped cars on Mill Street this morning, Wayne Devoe, left, driver of the tractor trailer truck, struck an abutment to the Free Bridge and caused considerable damage to the fiberglass body of the truck cab. (Lee Cohen photo)

In Brunswick

Trailer truck slams into bridge

BRUNSWICK — A truck hauling a loaded 21-ton trailer swerved off Mill Street and struck an abutment to the Free Bridge just before 7 this morning causing considerable damage to the cab of the truck.

Wayne Devoe, 33, Scarboro, driver of the truck for P.O. Dwindal of Freeport, said he tried to avoid hitting two cars that appeared to be stopped in Mill Street by swerving off to the right and turning up into the entrance to Free Bridge. Instead of making the sharp turn into the narrow entrance successfully, Devoe said the truck struck one of the stone abutments to the bridge. He said he did not know when he made the turn whether or not he would be able to avoid striking the abutment.

According to police, the two cars did not remain at the scene of the accident.

The Free Bridge has a sign on the Mill Street side saying it will support seven tons. Devoe said his rig, without cargo, weighs about 7,100 pounds, and loaded with a cargo of poultry by-products destined for the northern part of the state, the tractor and trailer weighed a total of 24.5 tons.

Damage to the 1971 Mack truck cab was estimated this morning to be between $3,000 and $6,000.

Devoe said he was not injured in the collision. It is not known whether any damage was done to the bridge.

Residents in Wiscasset want street two-way

WISCASSET — The board of selectmen accepted a petition signed by 102 residents requesting Lee Street be made a two-way street. No action was taken at the meeting Wednesday night on the request.

Selectmen said they would wait until next week's meeting to make a decision, thus giving townspeople an opportunity to think about the proposal and make their opinions known to selectmen.

Currently the section of Lee Street known as Tucker Hill is one-way with traffic going in an easterly direction towards the waterfront.

Gardiner Flood presented the petition to the selectmen and said two-way traffic the entire length of Lee Street would be more convenient. Such a route, if two-way, would take some of the congestion off Main Street and allow those heading out of town to Route 1 to bypass the shopping area of town.

The three-member board of selectmen completed appointments to the conservation commission Wednesday night when they appointed Thomas Kent, Chester Crocker, and Delmas Leighton to the five-member commission. Each will serve a one year term. Three weeks ago selectmen reappointed Eugene Stover chairman of the commission, and appointed Paul King to one of the five slots.

No action was taken at the regular weekly meeting on accepting a bid for the re-construction of Middle and Fore Streets this spring. Third selectman Roy E. Barnes said he had not even seen any of the four bids submitted to the board and the town engineer earlier in the week.

Outbreak checked

ASUNCION, Paraguay (UPI) — Federal authorities Tuesday reported they had discovered and checked an outbreak of jungle yellow fever in an area near the Brazilian border.

Public Health Ministry spokesmen said nine cases of the disease had been reported in the frontier region 300 miles northeast of Asuncion. Three of the cases were fatal, five others were cured and the remaining is under treatment.

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